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Government Administrations and Elections Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2200
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

It is my intention to **strongly oppose** transfer of 4.73 acres of land from the State of Connecticut to City of Milford as indicated in **Section 3 of Conveyance Act HB 6998** for the following reasons:

The creation of Silver Sands State Park established a recreational opportunity for Connecticut residents, providing all residents, especially those residing in inland communities, access to our limited public shoreline. Transfer of this property from land designated as State Park to the City of Milford for municipal purposes, **would strip recreational opportunities from the residents of nearby communities** Trumbull, Monroe, Shelton, Derby, and Orange, as well the rest of the 145 cities and towns in Connecticut that do not have shoreline frontage on Long Island Sound.

While Silver Sands totals just shy of 300 acres, the vast majority is unusable land. This acreage includes not only Charles Island, but the former city landfill, as well as a substantial tidal wetland, all of which is impassible by tourists and visitors alike. Transferring any of the land would **limit the usable acreage for recreation considerably**, to all of those who use the facility, including city residents.

Plans are in the works to construct a public restroom, maintenance facility, and ticket booth complex in the near future at Silver Sands. Currently there is ample parking for maximum park visitation, which will only improve once construction is complete. Granting the City of Milford the ability to provide parking and accessibility strictly for their own city residents through the transfer of this property **would place undue burden on the state, its budget and its resources** for restroom cleaning, trash removal, law enforcement, and other concerns regarding day to day park operations. It would also inhibit the ability to monitor and control visitation, enforce regulations, and maintain after-hours security, all of which are crucial for the safety and well-being of those who visit.

Being residents of the State of Connecticut, Milford residents are afforded the opportunity to purchase a season pass for a mere \$67.00. Approving the transfer of this property to the City to provide parking for their residents in avoidance of a daily or season fee, and would **grant an unfair waiver which is currently not provided to the residents of other shoreline communities**, namely Westport, Madison, or East Lyme, the locations of Sherwood Island, Hammonasset, and Rocky Neck State Parks respectively.

Please take these thoughts into consideration,

Melissa Baldino